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EDITION

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SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION™ FEATURING

THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU™



TM

THE MAN-MENACE CALLED...
MIDNIGHT!



CAN EVEN SHANG-CHI'S
FISTS OF FURY
PREVAIL--AGAINST THE
STARS OF DEATH?

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!** TM

MIDNIGHT BRINGS DARK DEATH!

"I STAND IN THE CHILLED EVENING BREEZE SLIPPING THROUGH THE REMNANT OF NATURE NEW YORKERS NAME **CENTRAL PARK**, PREPARING TO WELCOME MUCH-NEEDED **SLEEP** BESIDE A QUIET, WELL-GROWN **OAK**."

"THIS '**PARK**' IS MY HOME NOW, SINCE I LEFT THE ABODE OF MY FATHER, THE MANDARIN **FU MANCHU!**"

"YET, IN **THIS** HOME, I HAVE NO SAY OVER WHO MAY **VISIT** ME--"

"-- AND I FEAR THAT I WILL BE FORCED TO **FOREGO** MY REPOSE, TO TURN **INSTEAD** TO MY SKILL WITH THE **MARTIAL ARTS--**"

"--MY SKILL WITH **KUNG FU!**"

FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED BY **SAX ROHMER**

STEVE ENGLEHART • JIM STARLIN // AL MILGROM // TOM ORZECZOWSKI, LETTERER // ROY THOMAS
AUTHOR ARTIST CO-ARTIST LINDA LESSMANN, COLORIST EDITOR

WILL YA **LOOK** AT THAT DUDE, MR. CLEAN?

HE'S ALL DECKED OUT IN ONE'A THOSE FANCY **TOGAS**-- LIKE THOSE **SLANT-EYES** IN THE MOVIES OVER ON **42ND STREET**.

YEAH, RIPPER--AN' HERE I THOUGHT YA HADDA PAY CASH MONEY TO SEE ANYBODY DRESSED LIKE THAT!

DUDE MUST THINK HE'S PRETTY **BAD** TO WEAR **THAT THING!** I WONDER **HOW BAD!**

HA! RELAX, MAN! I WAS THINKIN' I MIGHT MAKE THE SLANT EAT SOME DIRT--

--AN' **LOOK!** HE'S **ALREADY** DOWN ON HIS **KNEES** MUNCHIN' SOME **WEEDS!**

"THE PLANTS WHICH GROW IN THE **SOIL** OF THIS BEFOULED CITY CONTAIN MANY **IMPURITIES**, YET **CERTAIN** OF THEM ARE **NUTRITIOUS**-- AND I DO NOT **BUY FOOD**."

"I WISH ONLY TO END MY DAY WITH **TRANQUILITY**."

HEY, CREEP!

DON'T YA KNOW **CENTRAL PARK'S DANGEROUS** AFTER DARK?

THERE'S **MUG-GERS** OUT HERE!

"**MUGGERS?**" I DO NOT KNOW THE **TERM**.

IT MEANS GUYS WHO **HURT** PEOPLE, **SLANT**-- MAYBE EVEN **KILL 'EM!**

NO ONE MAY **KILL ME**.

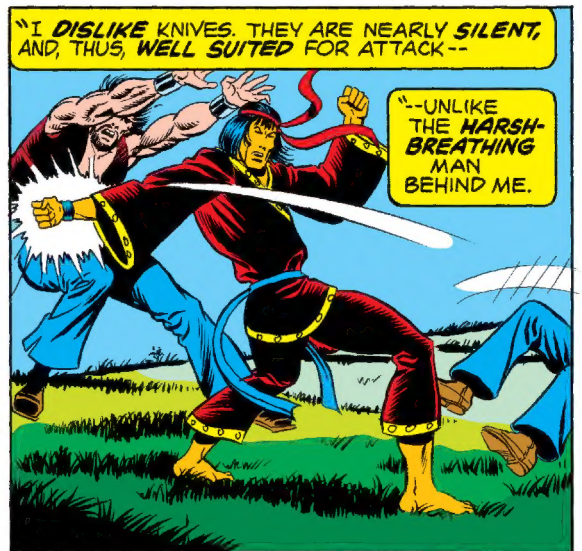
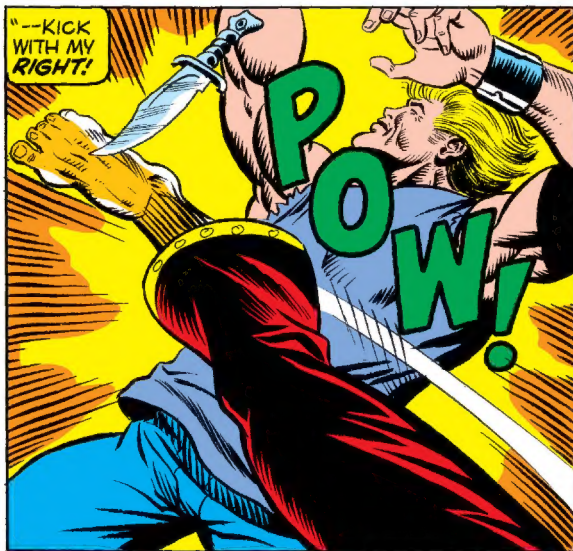
"THE **BALD ONE'S SWEAT-ODOR** SUDDENLY INCREASES **SHARPLY**. HIS **CHAIN** MAKES THE SOUND OF A **LARGE BEE** AS IT CUTS THE AIR."

NO?

POK!

"I THRUST MY HEAD **FORWARD** A **FRACTION** OF A **SECOND** TOO **LATE**."

NO.







SKILLFULLY
EXECUTED,
MY BROTHER!

"EH--?"



IT PLEASES ME TO SEE
THAT YOUR **NEW LIFE**
HAS NOT DEPRIVED
YOU OF A DISCIPLINED
MIND AND BODY.

"HE
STANDS IN
SHADOW,
OF COURSE.



"I RACE UP THE KNOLL
TO **GREET** HIM, HALF
CARRIED BY THE **JOY**
BUOYING MY SOUL!

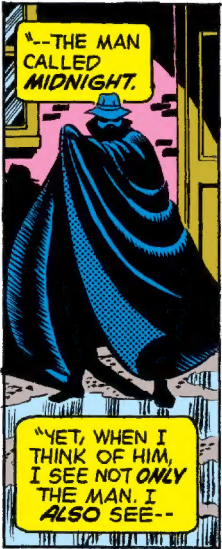
"BUT HE IS **VANISHED**,
WITH NO SLIGHTEST
SIGN MY **SENSES** CAN
SEIZE.

"OTHER MEN WOULD
WONDER IF THEY HAD
TRULY SEEN **ANYTHING**
OTHER THAN A **SHADOW**--



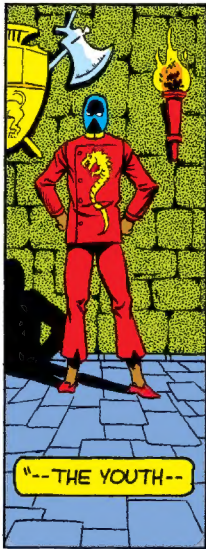
"-- BUT I AM **SHANG-CHI**,
SON OF **FU MANCHU**. I
DO NOT WONDER.

"I **SAW**
MY ONLY
FRIEND--



"--THE MAN
CALLED
MIDNIGHT.

"YET, WHEN I
THINK OF HIM,
I SEE NOT **ONLY**
THE MAN. I
ALSO SEE--



"--THE YOUTH--



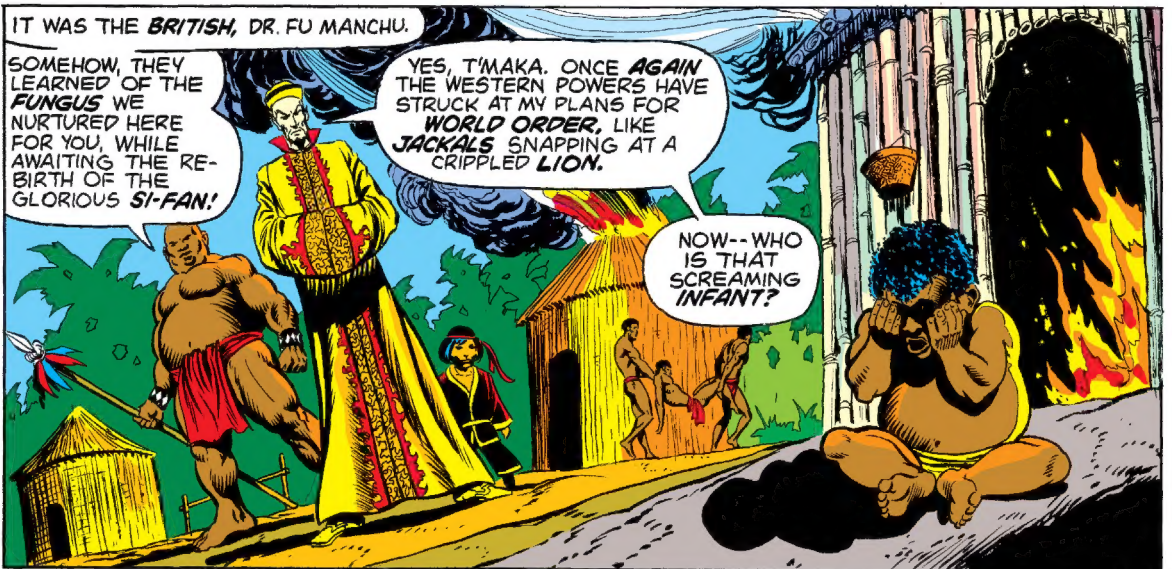
"--THE BOY--



"-- THE CHILD--



"--THE BABE.



IT WAS THE **BRITISH**, DR. FU MANCHU.

SOMEHOW, THEY
LEARNED OF THE
FUNGUS WE
NURTURED HERE
FOR YOU, WHILE
AWAITING THE RE-
BIRTH OF THE
GLORIOUS **SI-FAN!**

YES, T'MAKA. ONCE **AGAIN**
THE WESTERN POWERS HAVE
STRUCK AT MY PLANS FOR
WORLD ORDER, LIKE
JACKALS SNAPPING AT A
CRIPPLED **LION**.

NOW--WHO
IS THAT
SCREAMING
INFANT?



"THERE ARE NO **FIRMER** FRIENDSHIPS THAN THOSE FORMED BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE FORGING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE SAME **ADVERSITIES** TOGETHER. MINAI'S AND MY UPWARD PROGRESS THROUGH SCHOOL MADE US **INSEPARABLE**--



--UNTIL SIX DAYS AGO, WHEN I WAS SUMMONED BY MY **FATHER**-- FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. PETRIE, WHICH **BEGAN** MY NEW LIFE.

"AS FAR AS **UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD** AND **SKILL WITH THE MARTIAL ARTS** IS CONCERNED, I COULD BE HE AND HE COULD BE I.



BUT **WHY** DID HE **FLEE** FROM ME?



WHY DID I **FLEE** FROM HIM?

HE IS MY **ONLY FRIEND**, YET I FOUND I COULD NOT **FACE** HIM!

YOUR FINELY-HONED **SENSES** TOLD YOU HE IS **NO LONGER** THE SAME **SHANG-CHI** YOU KNEW, **MIDNIGHT**.

I ASKED YOU TO USE YOUR **UNIQUE ABILITIES** TO DISCOVER HIS PRESENT **LOCATION** SO THAT YOU WOULD **KNOW** THAT!

I **UNDERSTOOD** THAT YOU WOULD **FEEL** HIS BETRAYAL OF ME TO MY OPPRESSORS--

--YOUR OPPRESSORS!



YES, BUT-- HE IS MY **FRIEND**! I HAVE KNOWN THOSE WHO WERE **MORE SKILLFUL** THAN I, AND SO **TAUGHT** ME THEIR SKILLS--

--THOSE WHO WERE **LESS SKILLFUL** THAN I, AND SO **FELL** BEFORE ME--

--AND A **HANDFUL**, INCLUDING **SHANG-CHI**, WHO WERE MY **EQUALS**--

--BUT I HAVE KNOWN ONLY **ONE FRIEND**, AND IT IS **HE**!



YOU ALSO KNOW ONLY **ONE MASTER**, **MIDNIGHT**-- AND IT IS **I**!



HE WAS MY **SON** BEFORE HE BECAME YOUR **FRIEND**, BUT **SENTIMENT** IS A TENET OF **WESTERN** PHILOSOPHY, NOT **OURS**!

IT IS THE **AMERICAN** STREAK HE INHERITED FROM HIS **MOTHER** THAT **LED** HIM TO HIS TREACHERY!

IN OUR PHILOSOPHY, TREACHERY MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO GO **UNPUNISHED**-- AND IT GIVES ME NO QUALMS TO **ORDER** YOU, AS HIS EQUAL, TO **PROVIDE** THAT PUNISHMENT!

--UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU ALSO WISH TO TURN AGAINST ME.

NO, HONORABLE ONE, EVERYTHING I **AM** MAY BE LAID TO YOUR **WISDOM** AND **GENEROSITY**.

WITHOUT YOUR **INTERVENTION**, I WOULD BE **DEAD**-- OR, AT **BEST**, AN UNEDUCATED JUNGLE **SAVAGE**!

I AM YOUR **SLAVE**, NOW AND **FOREVER**!

YOU WILL **KILL** HIM FOR ME, THEN?

I WILL **KILL** HIM.

"MY FRIEND'S FLIGHT BANISHES **SLEEP** FROM MY THOUGHTS.

"I LEAVE THE **GRASS** OF CENTRAL PARK TO WALK THE **ASPHALT** AND **CEMENT** NEW YORKERS THINK MORE **VALUABLE**--

-- TO USE THE REFUSE, THE GRIME, THE POOLS OF PUTRID **LIQUID** BENEATH MY FEET TO REMIND ME HOW **LITTLE** I UNDERSTAND OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE MY FATHER'S RETREAT.

"LIKE MANHATTAN'S **WAY** OF **LIFE**, COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE OF ANOTHER MAN'S **MIND** WILL ALWAYS BE **BEYOND** ME.

HEY, YOU!

YEAH, YOU WITH THE **HAIR** ON YOUR HEAD!

WHADDAYA DOIN' ON THE **STREETS** AT THIS HOUR DRESSED LIKE **THAT** FOR, HUH?

I AM **SORRY**, OFFICER. I MEANT NO **OFFENSE**.

OH, A **WISE** GUY, HUH? I'M **SICK** 'O YOU KIDS GIVIN' ME THAT PHONY "**POLITENESS**" CRUD WHEN YER **LOOKIN'** AT ME--

--AN' THEN **LAUGHIN'** UP YER **SLEEVE** WHEN I TURN AROUND FOR HAVIN' **PUT** ME ON!

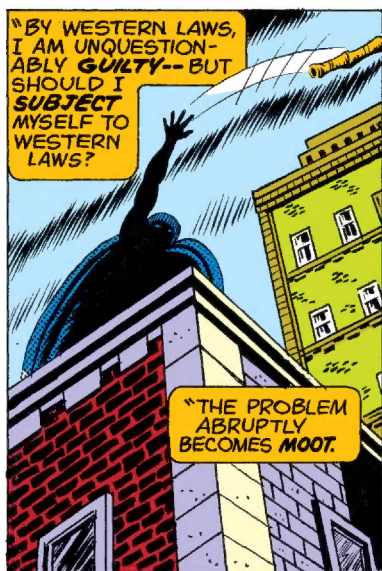
NOBODY TALKS LIKE THAT, KID!

BESIDES, NOW THAT I **THINK** ABOUT IT, YOU LOOK TO ME LIKE THAT GUY THE **SARGE** TOLD US ABOUT THIS MORNIN'--

--THE GUY THE **ENGLISH** COPS ARE **LOOKIN'** FOR, FOR THE **MURDER** O' SOME **DOCTOR** OVER THERE.

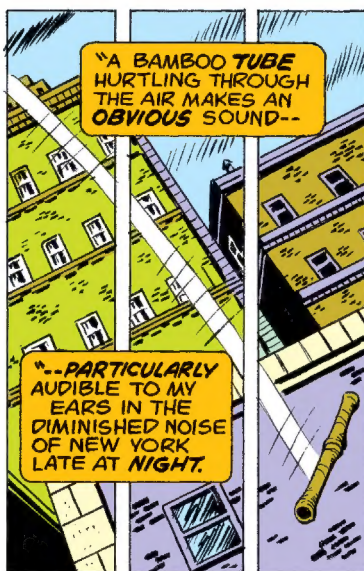
"I **KILLED** DR. PETRIE WHILE STILL UNDER MY FATHER'S **INFLUENCE**--

"--YET THAT IS NO **JUSTIFICATION** TO **ME**! NEITHER CAN IT BE TO **HIM**!



"BY WESTERN LAWS, I AM UNQUESTIONABLY **GUILTY**-- BUT SHOULD I **SUBJECT** MYSELF TO WESTERN LAWS?"

"THE PROBLEM ABRUPTLY BECOMES **MOOT**."



"A **BAMBOO TUBE** HURLING THROUGH THE AIR MAKES AN **OBVIOUS** SOUND--

"--**PARTICULARLY** AUDIBLE TO MY EARS IN THE **DIMINISHED** NOISE OF NEW YORK LATE AT NIGHT."



KLAK!

"HOWEVER, THE **OFFICER** SEEMS **OBLIVIOUS** UNTIL IT STRIKES THE STREET."



SO **THAT'S** YER GAME, HUH? DRAWIN' MY **ATTENTION** SO YER **HIPPIE** FRIENDS CAN ATTACK ME FROM THE **ROOFTOPS**, HUH?

I DO NOT KNOW THE TERM "**HIPPIE**."

"AS **CHILDREN**, M'NAI AND I USED TO THROW **MESSAGES** TO EACH OTHER IN THIS MANNER AFTER THE **TORCHES** WERE EXTINGUISHED."



WELL, BUDDY, IF **ONE MORE BRICK** COMES FLYIN' AT ME, YER GONNA **REGRET** IT! BETTER TELL YER **FRIENDS**!

"M'NAI'S ASSOCIATION WITH **FU MANCHU** PREVENTS HIM FROM **REVEALING** HIMSELF TO THIS OFFICER. I **CANNOT** CONTACT MY FRIEND WITH THE OFFICER **WATCHING** ME."



TOK!



"HE FALLS **HEAVILY**, BUT CONSCIOUSNESS WILL BE HIS AGAIN IN **FIVE MINUTES** AT MOST."

"I SLIDE THE **PARCHMENT** FROM ITS CYLINDER AND **READ**."



"HONORED FRIEND, THE MORNING SUN WILL SHED ITS WARMTH UPON HIM WHOSE PATH IS MOST NEARLY **CORRECT**."

MEET ME AT THE STREETS NAMED **BROADWAY** AND **HOUSTON**. M'NAI."



A **CHALLENGE!**

A **CHALLENGE TO THE DEATH!**

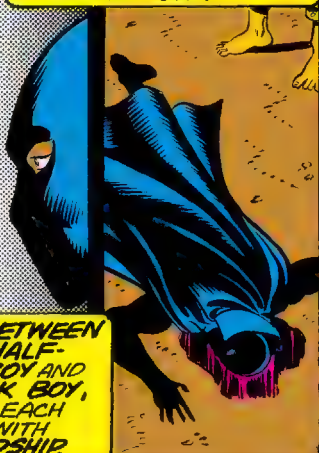
"SCENES MARCH
IN MY BRAIN,
UNBIDDEN.



"IN ONE, M'NAI STANDS
OVER MY LIFELESS BODY.
IT IS AN UNHAPPY THOUGHT.



"IN ANOTHER, I STAND
OVER M'NAI'S LIFELESS
BODY. IT IS A TERRIBLE
THOUGHT.

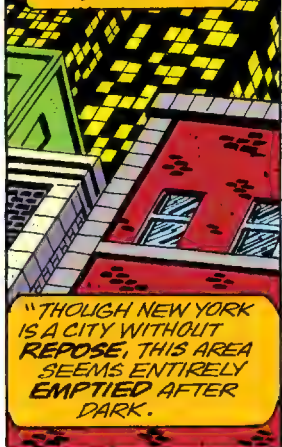


"AND IN BETWEEN
ARE THE HALF-
BREED BOY AND
THE BLACK BOY,
WARMING EACH
OTHER WITH
FRIENDSHIP.

"BUT I MUST NO
LONGER THINK
OF BOYS. I MUST
THINK OF
MEN.

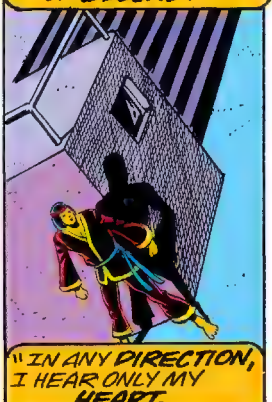


"THE SOUTHERN
SECTION OF
MANHATTAN
ISLAND.



"THOUGH NEW YORK
IS A CITY WITHOUT
REPOSE, THIS AREA
SEEMS ENTIRELY
EMPTY AFTER
DARK.

"IT LOOMS WITH
GREAT GRAY WARE-
HOUSES, AND
TWISTS WITH SUDDEN
ALLEYS THAT MELT
AWAY THE MIDDLE
OF BLOCKS.



"IN ANY DIRECTION,
I HEAR ONLY MY
HEART.

"BUT NOW, A SHADOW--



"--HURLED INTO
ENORMITY AGAINST
A ROTTED BUILDING'S
WALL BY SOME LOW-
LYING LAMP AROUND
THE CORNER.

"I SLIP FORWARD
THE COOL WIND MAKING
MORE SOUND THAN MY
PASSAGE --BUT NO
ONE IS THERE.



"NOW
ANOTHER
SHADOW,
FARTHER
UP AN
ALLEY.

"ALL OF MY TRAINED
SENSES FUNCTIONING
FULLY, I GLIDE INTO
THE WAITING DARK,
SEARCHING...



Snap

"BEHIND
ME!"



"HE STEPS OUT SOLIDLY,
A LIVING SHADOW IN
A REALM OF SHADOWS.

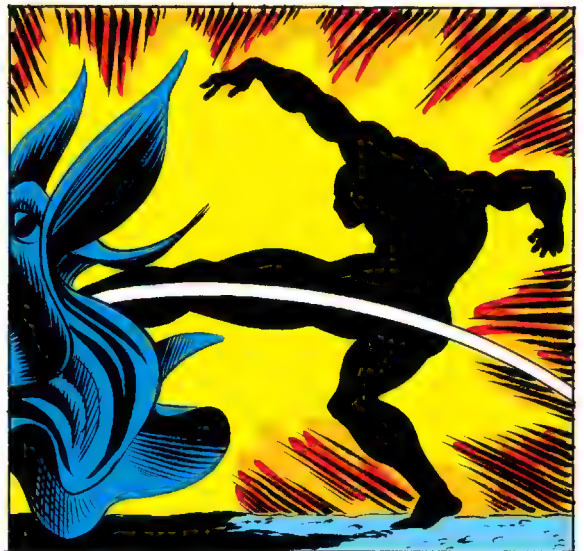
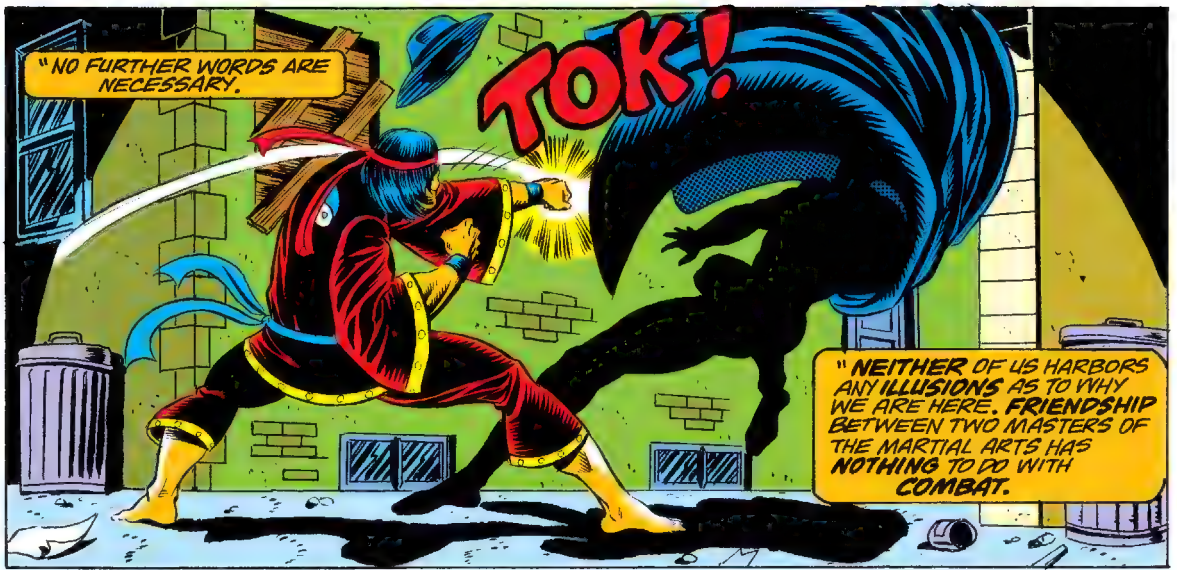


"FAR AWAY,
ACROSS WATER,
A CLOCK TOLLS
MIDNIGHT.

I SEE, MY BROTHER,
THAT YOU HAVE COME
TO DIE.

NO,
M'NAI. I
HAVE COME
TO LIVE.







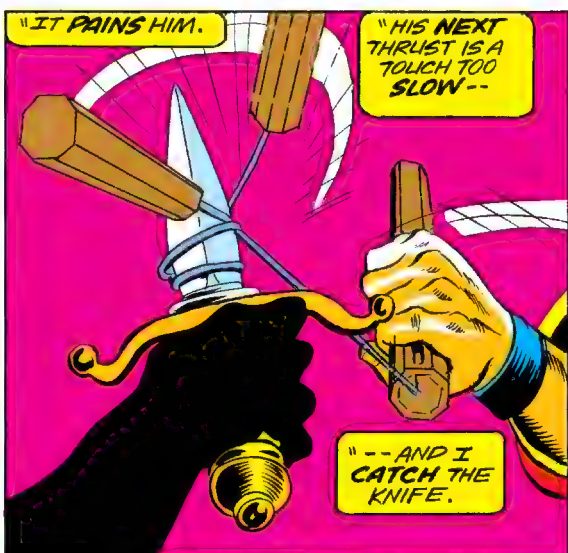
"HE KNOWS I COME PREPARED.
MY NUNCHAKU WHIZZ FREE EVEN
AS THE ALLEY WALLS RETURN THE
SOUND OF HIS VOICE.



"HE STRIKES WELL. I
RECOIL WELL. HE
MISSES.



"I STEP AROUND THE BLADE AS HE RECOVERS
HIMSELF, SMASHING HIM FOUR TIMES
RUNNING WITH THE ON-SWEEPING MOTION
OF MY ARM.



"IT PAINS HIM.

"HIS NEXT
THRUST IS A
TOUCH TOO
SLOW--

"-- AND I
CATCH THE
KNIFE.

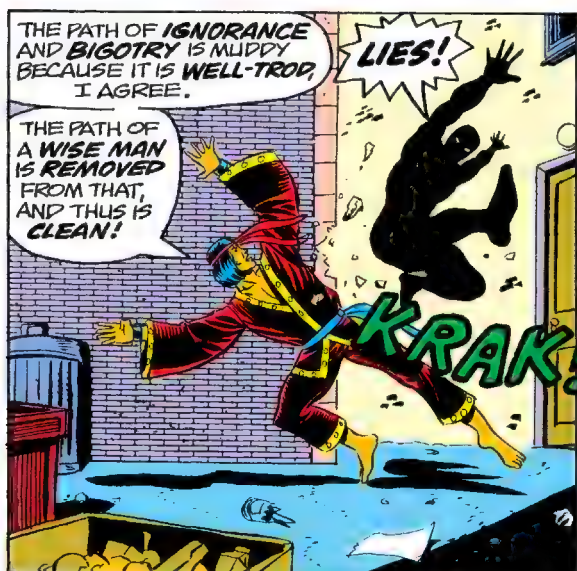
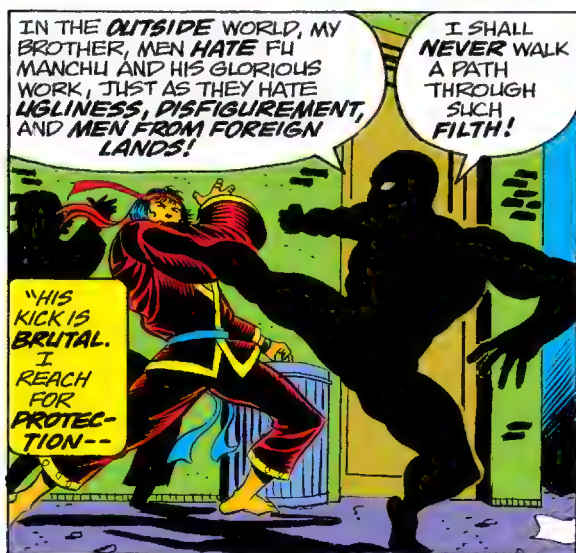
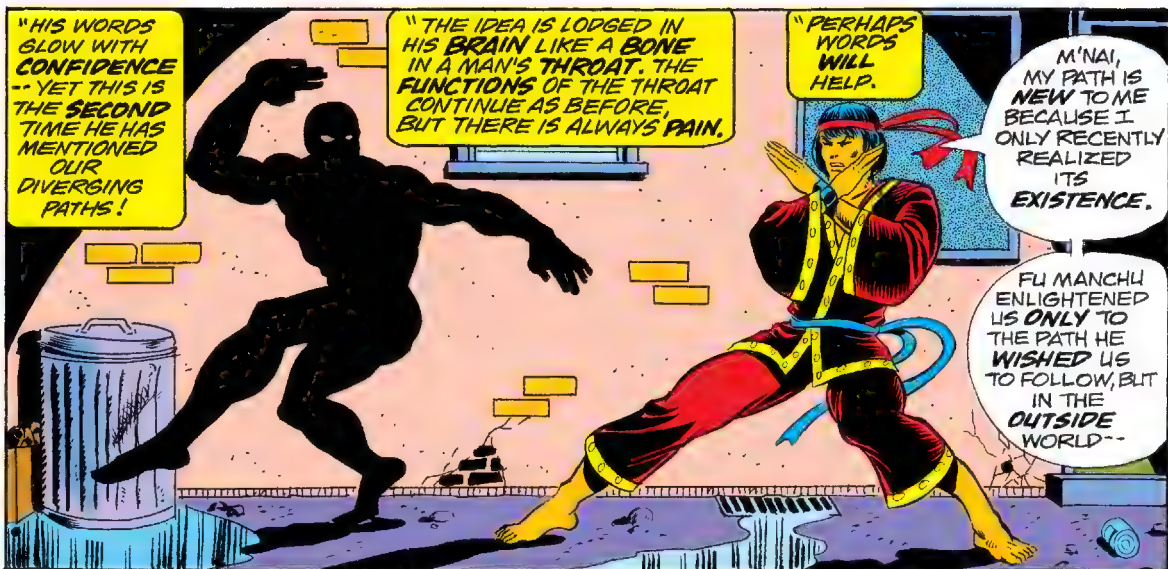


"A TWIST TO PULL
IT FROM HIS HAND,
AND NOW --



WEAPONS WERE A **MERCY**
OF A SORT, SHANG-CHI. IN
UNARMED COMBAT, I
SHALL BE YOUR **SUPERIOR**--

-- FOR
YOUR PATH
IS **NEW** TO
YOU, AND **MINE**
IS AS OLD AS
MY **MEMORIES!**





NEW YORK'S
FINEST DON'T
GO FOR BEATIN'
UP COPS, PALLY,
AN' WE'RE NOT
AS INEPT AS
YOU THINK!

TRACKIN'
YOU DOWN
WAS NO HARDER
THAN CHECKIN'
YER DESCRIPTION,
MR. SHANG-CHI,
MURDERER!

NOW
REACH--



I SHALL
FIND YOU
LATER, MY
BROTHER.

HEY!



WELL, I'LL BE--!
THE KID'S GOT
GUTS, AT ANY
RATE!

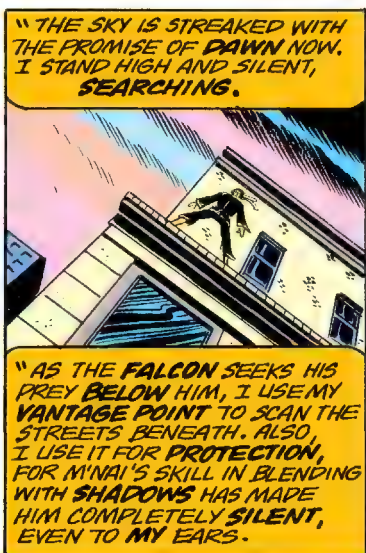
OKAY,
BOSTON
BLACKIE--AT
LEAST I
COLLARED YOU,
SO LET'S--

BUT, BOY, AM I
GONNA GET THE
HORSELAUGH
BACK AT THE
STATION!



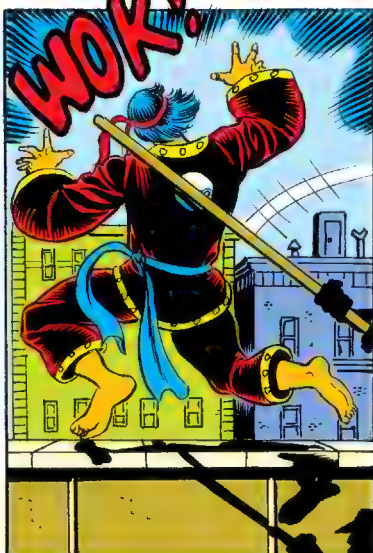
HOLY
CROW!

HE'S
GONE,
TOO!

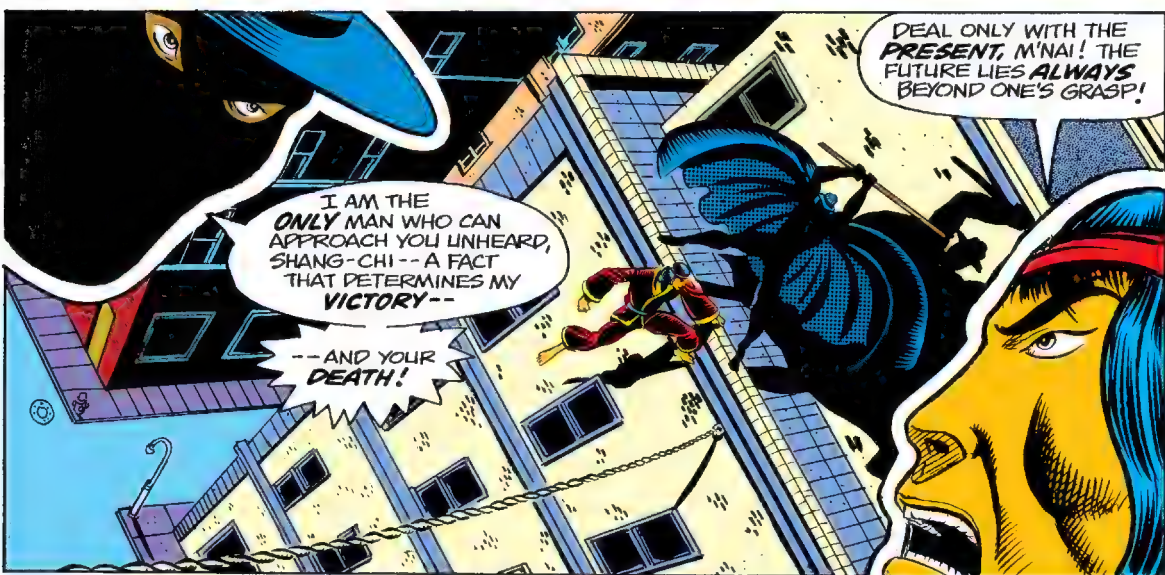


"THE SKY IS STREAKED WITH
THE PROMISE OF DAWN NOW.
I STAND HIGH AND SILENT,
SEARCHING.

"AS THE FALCON SEEKS HIS
PREY BELOW HIM, I USE MY
VANTAGE POINT TO SCAN THE
STREETS BENEATH. ALSO,
I USE IT FOR PROTECTION,
FOR M'NAI'S SKILL IN BLENDING
WITH SHADOWS HAS MADE
HIM COMPLETELY SILENT,
EVEN TO MY EARS.



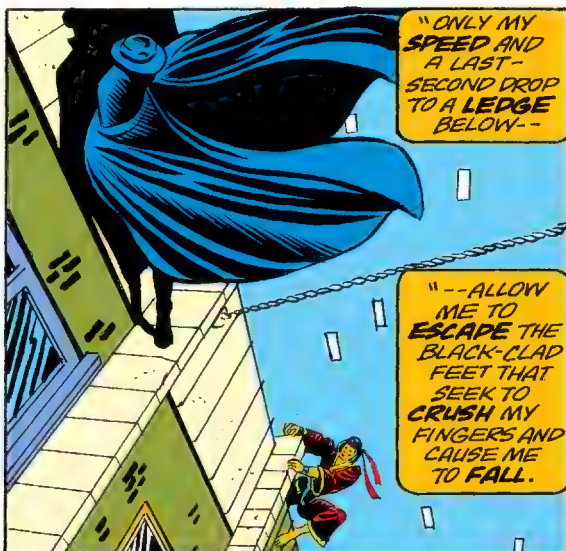
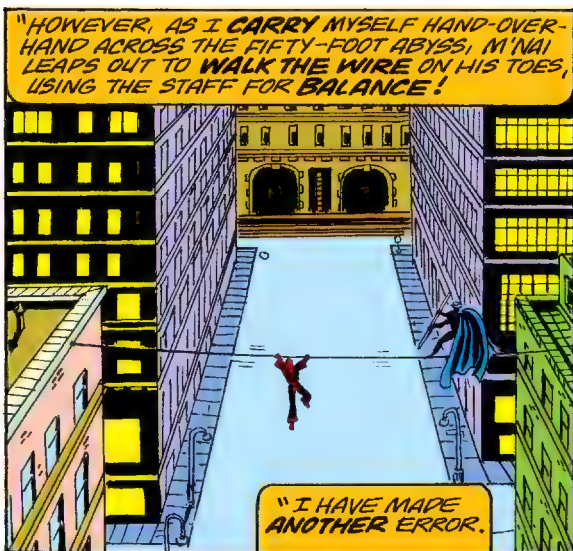
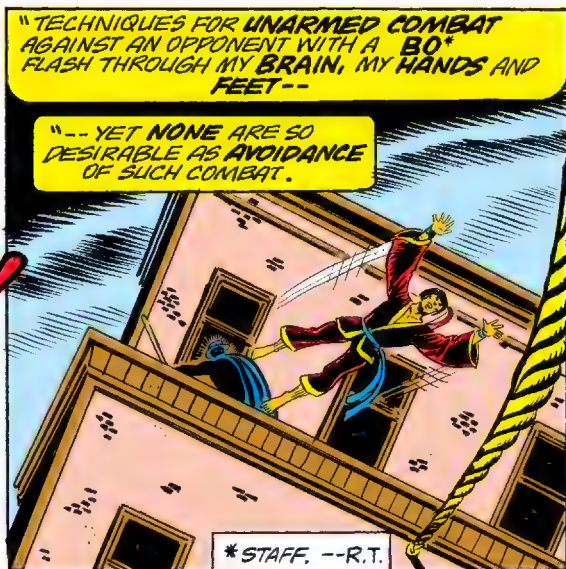
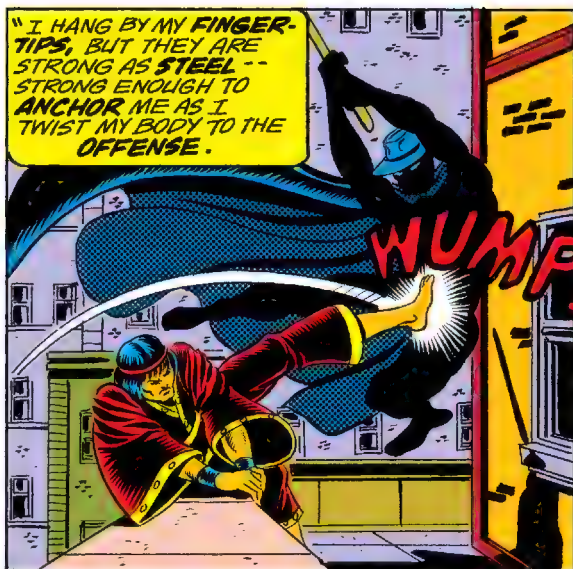
WOK!



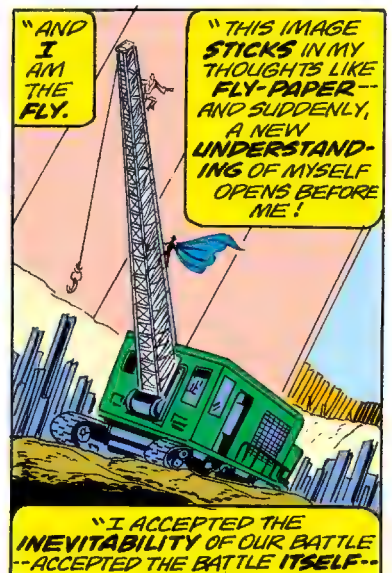
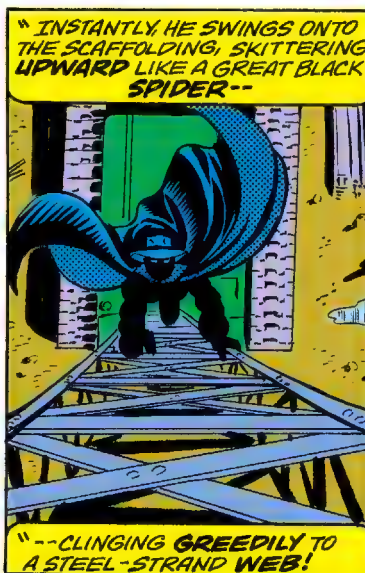
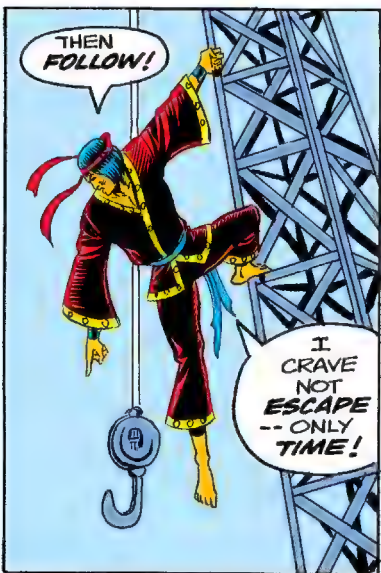
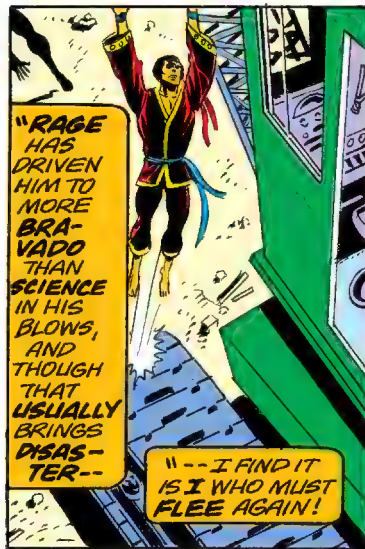
I AM THE
ONLY MAN WHO CAN
APPROACH YOU UNHEARD,
SHANG-CHI--A FACT
THAT DETERMINES MY
VICTORY--

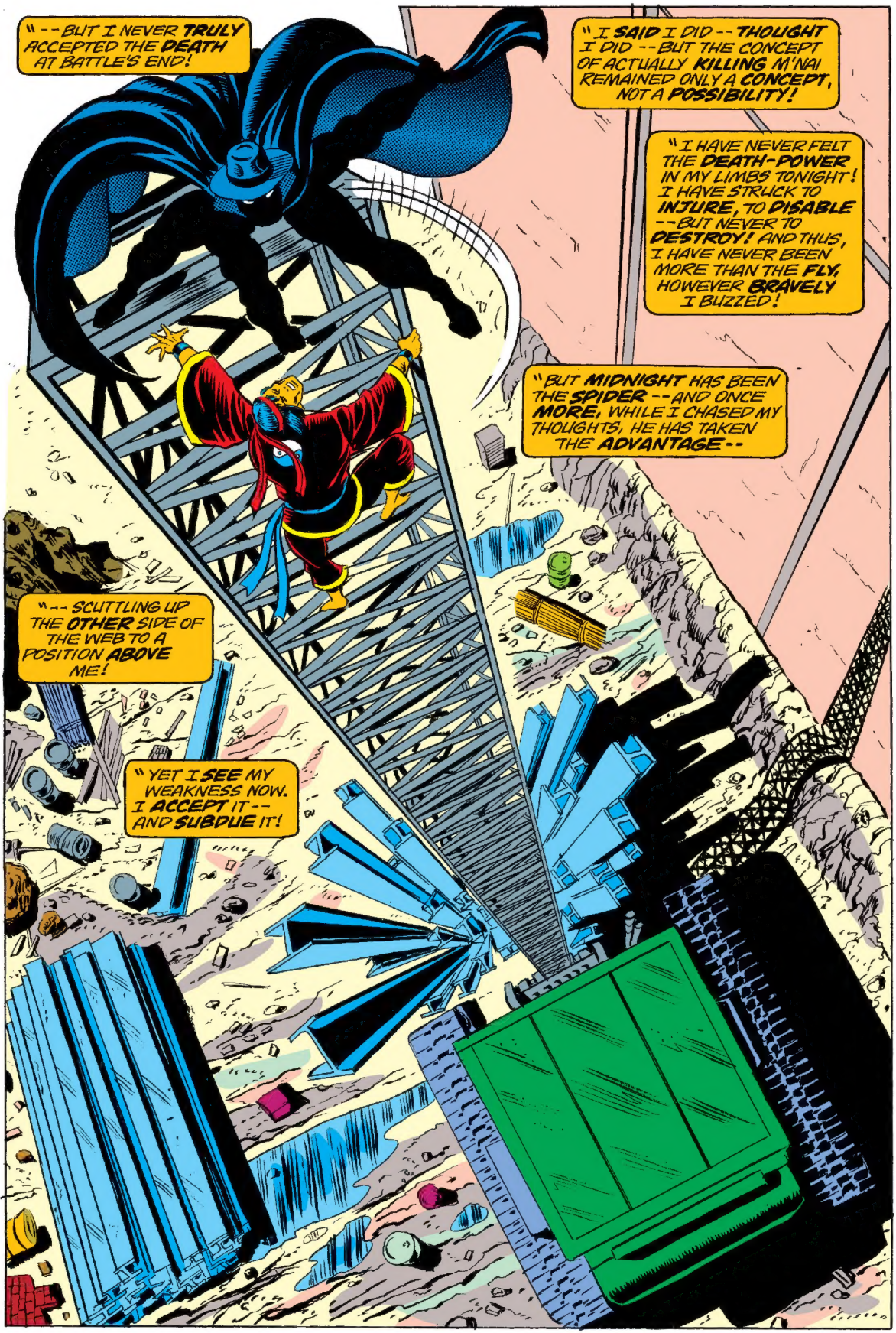
--AND YOUR
DEATH!

DEAL ONLY WITH THE
PRESENT, M'NAI! THE
FUTURE LIES ALWAYS
BEYOND ONE'S GRASP!









"-- BUT I NEVER **TRULY**
ACCEPTED THE **DEATH**
AT BATTLE'S END!

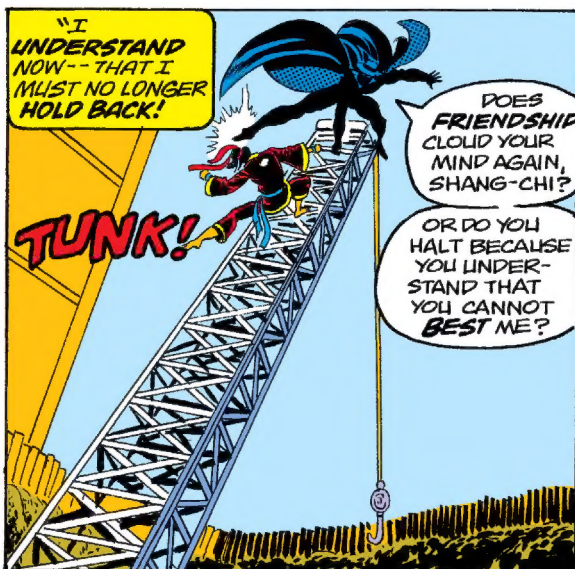
"I SAID I DID -- **THOUGHT**
I DID -- BUT THE **CONCEPT**
OF ACTUALLY **KILLING** M'NAI
REMAINED ONLY A **CONCEPT**,
NOT A **POSSIBILITY!**

"I HAVE NEVER FELT
THE **DEATH-POWER**
IN MY LIMBS TONIGHT!
I HAVE **STRUCK TO**
INJURE, TO DISABLE
-- BUT NEVER TO
DESTROY! AND THUS,
I HAVE NEVER BEEN
MORE THAN THE **FLY**,
HOWEVER **BRAVELY**
I **BUZZED!**

"BUT **MIDNIGHT** HAS BEEN
THE **SPIDER** -- AND ONCE
MORE, WHILE I CHASED MY
THOUGHTS, HE HAS TAKEN
THE **ADVANTAGE**--

"-- **SCUTTILING UP**
THE **OTHER SIDE** OF
THE **WEB** TO A
POSITION **ABOVE**
ME!

"YET I **SEE** MY
WEAKNESS NOW.
I **ACCEPT** IT--
AND **SUBDUE** IT!



"I UNDERSTAND NOW-- THAT I MUST NO LONGER HOLD BACK!"

DOES FRIENDSHIP CLOUD YOUR MIND AGAIN, SHANG-CHI?

OR DO YOU HALT BECAUSE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU CANNOT BEST ME?



HATE DRIVES MY ATTACK, MY BROTHER-- HATE THAT **TWISTS** THE ALREADY- TWISTED FACE UNDER THE **MASK** INTO A SIGHT THAT COULD KILL YOU IN **ITSELF!**

YOU SPOKE OF LOVE BEFORE --FOR YOU AND YOUR FATHER--



--BUT LOVE IS NOT MINE TO HAVE-- LET ALONE TO GIVE!

YOU EASED MY DAYS AS A YOUTH, YET I DO NOT NEED YOU FOR THE REMAINDER OF MY DAYS!



I NEED NO ONE!

I AM ALONE!



I UNDERSTAND IT NOW! I AM NO MAN LIKE OTHER MEN! I CANNOT BE THAT! I AM A WEAPON!

"HIS KICKS HAVE BLOODED MY FACE, YET NOW HIS VOICE CRESCENDOS IN BLIND PASSION--

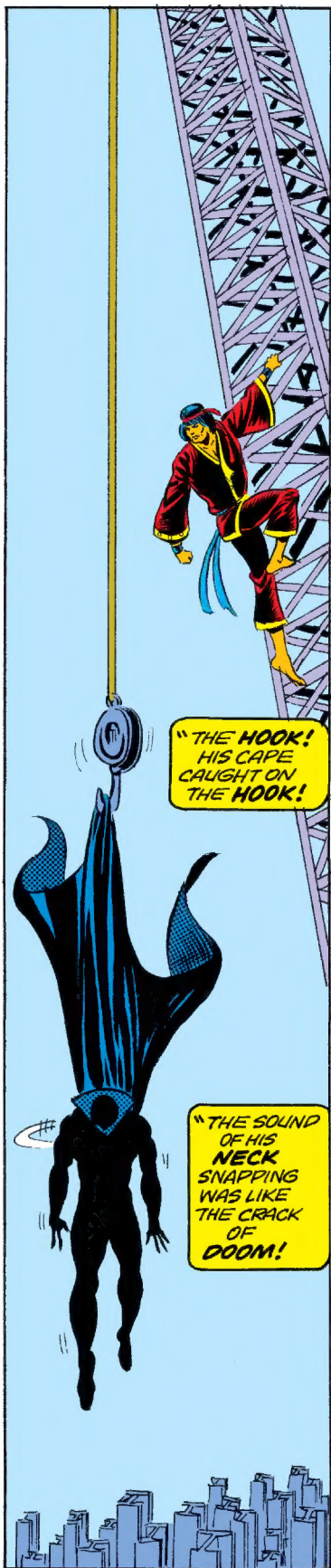
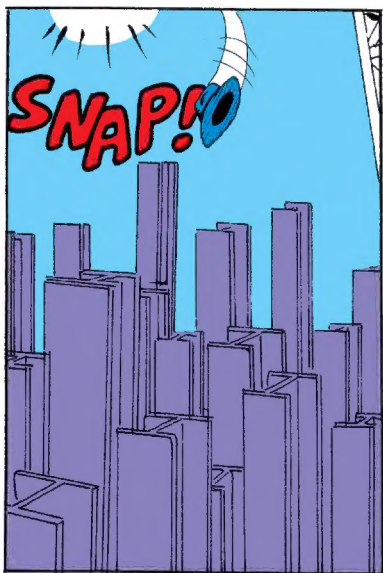


"--AND NOW I SWING AWAY!"

"HIS WEIGHT ALL RIDES IN HIS FOOT-- AND HIS FOOT ENCOUNTERS NOTHING BUT AIR!

"OFF-BALANCE, HE CANNOT CONTROL HIS FALL AS BEFORE! I SHALL HAVE HIM!

ALIEE!



"I CLIMB **NUMBLY** FROM MY PERCH. STRANGELY -- OR PERHAPS **NOT SO STRANGELY**-- A **THOUGHT** SLIPS UNCALLED FROM THE PAST.



"I ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE HIS FACE, TO SEE WHAT DROVE HIM.

"NOW IS MY CHANCE, I KNOW. I HAVE ONLY TO CLIMB AGAIN, AND PULL HIM TO ME --

"-- BUT EVEN WITHOUT THE SEEING, I NOW KNOW THE SCARS THAT PLAGUED HIM.



"FARE-
WELL,
M'NAI...
MY
BROTHER."



By NATURE, men are nearly ALIKE; by PRACTICE, they get to be WIDE APART.

NEXT: THE RETURN OF SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH AND THE LAIR OF THE LOST!

Shadowcat

